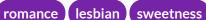


Every Direction is North















Chapter 1 by George Langham

I met her online dating, my first question wasn't the obvious one "why did your parents call you a cardinal direction?" cause I thought I'd come across as a jerk. No first of all, I just said hello.

It wasn't long until we were chatting every spare minute, both excited for the first time we were going to meet.

Our first date is tomorrow.

Chapter 2 by SaintSayaka



Maybe then I can ask her why she was named after a cardinal direction.

Then again, considering that my name is "Alaska", I guess I can't really say anything.

Two gay girls walk into a bar. One is named after a state, the other after a direction. It sounds like the beginning of a terrible joke.

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Chapter 4 by Brock Thompson



"We kind of go together, don't we?" North said, reincarnating the fire that was in our online chat. "I mean, Alaska is far up North."

Alaska is far up North. I smiled mischievously at her, and she immediately got the unintentional dirty joke that she had said. North blushed and rolled her eyes.

"Why are you so aggressive?" she said jokingly.

"Well, that's what I am, and it seems to work fine doesn't it?" I smiled at her. "It did get me a date with a beautiful girl, after all."

North blushed even deeper and gave me a cute, fluffy kind of wink over the brim of her coffee mug.

Chapter 5 by Alexis Smith



"So," I said, putting down my cup.

"So," she replied with a sweet little smirk. Her eyes were like the earth of the old farm I used to go to, back when Uncle Reg wasn't stuck behind bars.

I shook my head. No use thinking about that now. Say something, anything. Ask her a question. People like to talk about themselves. Get her to talk about herself.

"Why are you named after a cardinal direction?" I blurted out. I clamped my hands over my mouth in horror. "Oh my god, that wasn't even subtle," I muttered, running my fingers through my hair. "I just...blah. That was such a basic thing to say. You're probably so tired of that question. Oh my god. I'm so sorry."

She laughed. It wasn't a pretty laugh, like girls are "supposed to" have. No, it was too loud and throaty and coarse. It was beautiful.

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She took a sip of her punch. "I don't want to talk about it right now," she said carefully. "Maybe in a few dates."

Chapter 6 by George Langham



"oh, so there'll be more?" I said with a wry smile.

"in fact, nah, you're not my type, I only like girls who are into folk music, covered in tattoos and named after states."

"oh damn, you got me there."

We both laugh, hers is just the sweetest little giggle you'd ever hear.

Chapter 7 by The Girl Who Lived



Her phone made a small ding and she glanced down at it. She frowned a little and after a moment of hesitation, she flipped it over so the screen was facing the table.

"Sorry 'bout that," she said, referring to her phone.

"It's alright. What was that about? You looked upset." I replied.

"Oh, it's nothing. It's fine. Nothing important." she said as if to convince herself. I didn't believe her, but I didn't push it. Not on the first date, anyway. Maybe the third... or fourth... After all, she did say there would be more.

Chapter 8 by Joseph Kinman



Three dates later I finally had my answer. North was the direction her parents were oriented on her conception night. As her parents lay under a star lit sky, breathing a little heavy, Polaris shone brighter than any other. They looked at the sky and dreamed of the future, their future.

"If we make it together through all this."

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"I hope so. I hope so."

It later came to light that north was the direction her parents were running. Running away.

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